

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of determining the contour of a substantially flat workpiece (20, 30, 50), comprising:

applying one or more reference markers to the workpiece (20, 30, 50) and to a workpiece support used in cooperation with the workpiece;

obtaining at least two overlapping digital photographs (35, 55a-d) of the workpiece (20, 30, 50) from different perspectives;

photogrammetrically processing the photographs (35, 55a-d) to produce a true-to-scale overall image (56) of the workpiece (20, 30, 50); and

determining the contour of the workpiece (20, 30, 50) from the true-to-scale overall image (56).

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said step of applying the reference markers comprises the step of applying a plurality of length scales (43) distributed over a surface of the workpiece.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said step of applying the reference markers comprises the step of applying a plurality of position-markers (41, 51) distributed over a surface of the workpiece.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the workpieces (20, 30, 50) are sheet metal parts of an automobile.

Claim 5 (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 5 1, wherein the reference markers are plurality of length scales (43) or position-markers (41, 51) distributed over a surface of the workpiece.

7. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 5 1, wherein the workpiece support is dark in color in comparison with the workpiece (20, 30, 50).

8. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of applying a contrasting coating to the workpiece (20, 30, 50)

Claim 9 (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A method of establishing a form die for cutting sheet metal parts, comprising:

producing a prototype of the form die;

cutting a test sheet with the prototype form die;

determining the contour of the test sheet ~~in accordance with~~ using the method of claim 1;

comparing the contour of the test sheet to a reference contour; and

adjusting the shape of a subsequent prototype form die based on the comparison of the test sheet contour to the reference contour.

14. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for determining the contour of a substantially flat workpiece (20, 30, 50), comprising:

one or more reference markers for application to the workpiece;

a workpiece support having at least some of said references disposed thereon;

a digital camera (21) for recording digital, electronically stored photographs (35, 55a-d), of the workpiece (20, 30, 50); and

a data processing unit for photogrammetrically processing the stored photographs (35, 55a-d), for producing a true-to-scale overall image (56) of the workpiece (20, 30, 50) therefrom and for determining the contour of the workpiece (20, 30, 50) from the true-to-scale overall image.

15. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the reference markers are position-markers (41, 51).

16. (Original) the apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the reference marks are length scales (43).

17. (Cancelled)